



**BICYCLE
NETWORK®**

FEDERAL BUDGET SUBMISSION

NOVEMBER 2020

Prepared by Dr Nicholas Hunter, Bicycle Network

Who we are

With nearly 50,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world. With a 40-year history, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians by making it easier for people to ride a bike.

Operating nationally, we have a measurable, successful and large-scale impact in community participation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through bike riding.

We achieve this through:

- improving the bike riding environment by working with government at all levels to provide better infrastructure, legislation, data, policies and regulations
- delivering successful, large-scale behaviour change programs such as Ride2School and Ride2Work
- providing services and insurance that support bike riders through nationwide membership
- running mass participation bike riding events such as the Great Vic Bike Ride
- being a key national spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity

If you need our help to build a nation of bike riders, please contact us.

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Executive summary

There has never been a better time to change the way we move around our communities. COVID-19 brought abrupt and dramatic changes to national transport systems and cast significant impacts on our economy, our environment, and our physical and mental wellbeing. As we move towards a better normal, we are asking the Morrison Government to consider the benefits of active travel not only for a dramatically changing transport system, but for restoring the physical, mental and social health of Australians.

To support an active transport future in a COVID-normal Australia, Bicycle Network's budget submission focuses on three key domains: adaptation, appeal and accessibility.

Adaptation recommendations focus on how we can repurpose public space to maximise health and wellbeing, restore our local economies, and invite Australians back into community spaces, whilst practicing appropriate social distancing measures.

Appeal recommendations comprise national strategies for promoting an active bike riding lifestyle. The majority of Australians already have the equipment, skill and motivation to ride. We should be encouraging their transition to becoming regular riders, and earning the numerous health rewards.

Finally, our **accessibility** recommendations outline policy changes and awareness programs that minimize road risks and create a safe space for riders and drivers. To build a nation of confident bike riders, we must identify and minimise barriers to rider safety.

Together, let's take advantage of Australia's increased interest in bike riding to help build a better normal.

Adaptation

- 1.1** Establish urban placemaking and street-calming funds for urban space restoration
- 1.2** Commit to 250km of active travel infrastructure funding
- 1.3** Establish a 'local discoveries' fund to promote active tourism between local and regional communities

Appeal

- 2.1** Funding for programs that increase cycling diversity
- 2.2** National Ride2School and Road Ready programs
- 2.3** Introduce national pay-to-ride-to-work and tax rebate schemes

Accessibility

- 3.1** Establish a national strategy to target distracted driving
- 3.2** Establish national prevention measures and awareness programs to eliminate 'dooring'
- 3.3** Establish national safety standards and fund awareness programs for heavy vehicles

Budget impact summary

Adaptation

| Recommendation | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 1.1 Urban placemaking and street-calming fund | \$70.0 | \$10.0 | \$10.0 | \$10.0 | \$100.0 |
| 1.2 Active travel infrastructure | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$400.0 |
| 1.3 Active tourism fund | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$280.0 |

Appeal

| Recommendation | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 2.1 Cycling diversity fund | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$32.0 |
| 2.2 Ride2School and RoadReady programs | \$9.5 | \$9.5 | \$9.5 | \$9.5 | \$38.0 |
| 2.3 National bike incentivisation | \$300.0 | \$300.0 | \$300.0 | \$300.0 | \$1,200.0 |

Accessibility

| Recommendation | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 3.1 Distracted driving national strategy | \$- | \$- | \$- | \$- | \$- |
| 3.2 'Dooring' national driving strategy | \$- | \$- | \$- | \$- | \$- |
| 3.3 National safety standards and awareness programs for heavy vehicles | \$38.9 | \$38.9 | \$38.9 | \$38.9 | \$155.6 |

Building an active future for Australia

The COVID-19 virus continues to pose significant challenges for Australia and, as a result, we face many uncertainties regarding our economy, transport systems, wellbeing, and community life. However, we should use this time to reimagine rather than respond.

For over a century, our national transport system has been dependent on motor vehicles as the primary transport mode. This has inevitably contributed to increased pollution, congestion, and sedentary lifestyles.

At the same time, there have been major declines in public transport use, which is expected to continue over the long term. We cannot afford for these commuters' to opt for motor vehicles. Access to our cities will be significantly impacted, increasing traffic congestion and pollution even further, and, most importantly, inhibiting economic recovery efforts.

As we slowly move back into our urban spaces, we have a chance to turn things around.

Active travel offers more rewards than risks

Active travel (walking and bike riding) has the potential to improve physical and mental wellbeing, reduce noise, decrease travel-associated air pollution, and provide positive economic outcomes for individuals.

It is unsurprising that more and more health professionals are encouraging their patients to take up cycling¹. There is overwhelming evidence that active travel offers a range of health benefits²⁻⁸:

Subjective well-being
Mental Health
Commuter satisfaction
Positive mood

Body mass index
Stress levels
Diabetes risks
All-cause mortality

The benefits of regular bike riding



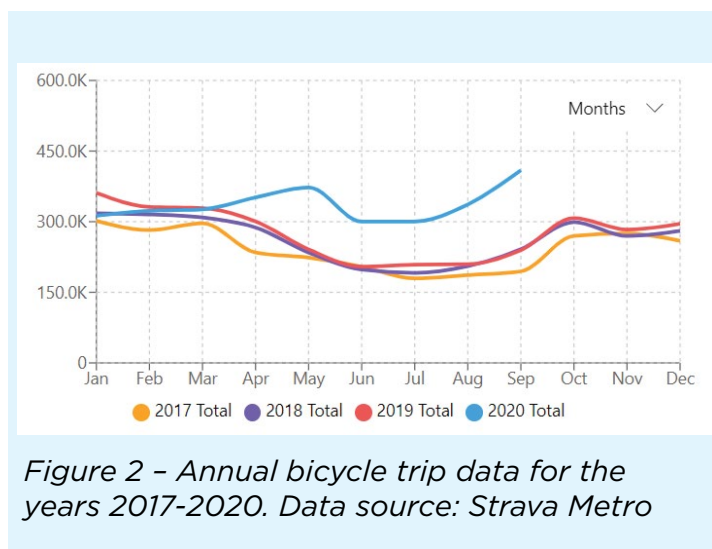
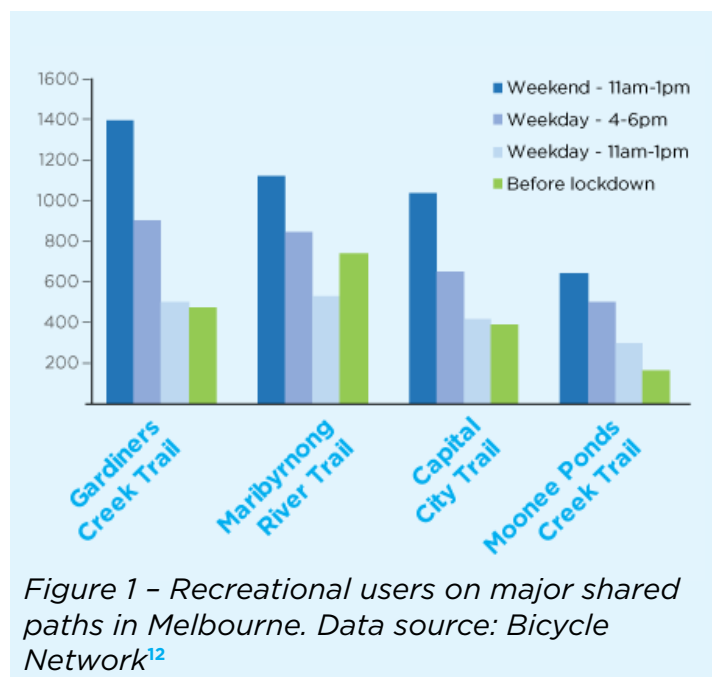
Research suggests not only that the combined physical, mental and social benefits from this activity substantially outweigh safety risks^{9,10}, but that the benefits of investments in bike networks dramatically outweigh the costs¹¹.

Investing in active transport can integrate physical activity into daily routines, which will ensure Australians are well on the way to achieving the health standards set out in the Australian Government's *Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines*, and the actions to target mental health outcomes outlined in the *National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan*.

The demand is already here, so let's ride the wave

There is a boom in active travel on our major roads and shared paths. Bicycle Network revealed a staggering **270 per cent growth** in bike use along Victoria's shared paths, and 138 per cent growth in general recreational activity¹². Strava Metro data provided to Bicycle Network has also revealed that user trips are up by almost 200K compared to previous years.

Now is Australia's chance to make a positive change, to build a better normal.



Promoting active travel and repurposing public space both provide exciting opportunities to reap health, economic, and environmental rewards that will last over long periods.

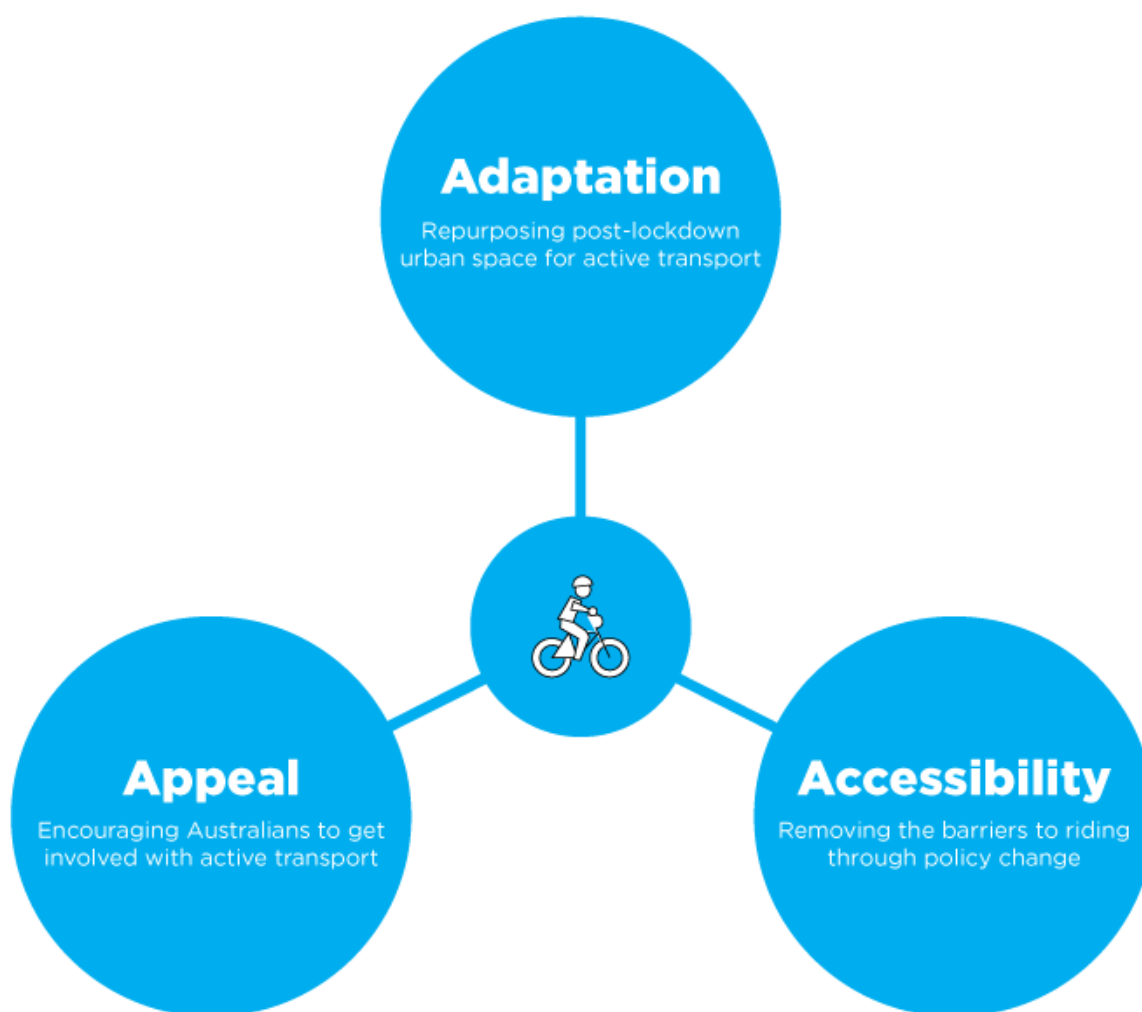
Let's be leaders, not followers

Bicycle Network's 2021-2022 budget submission isn't just about bikes. By reconnecting our public space through active travel and community-focused

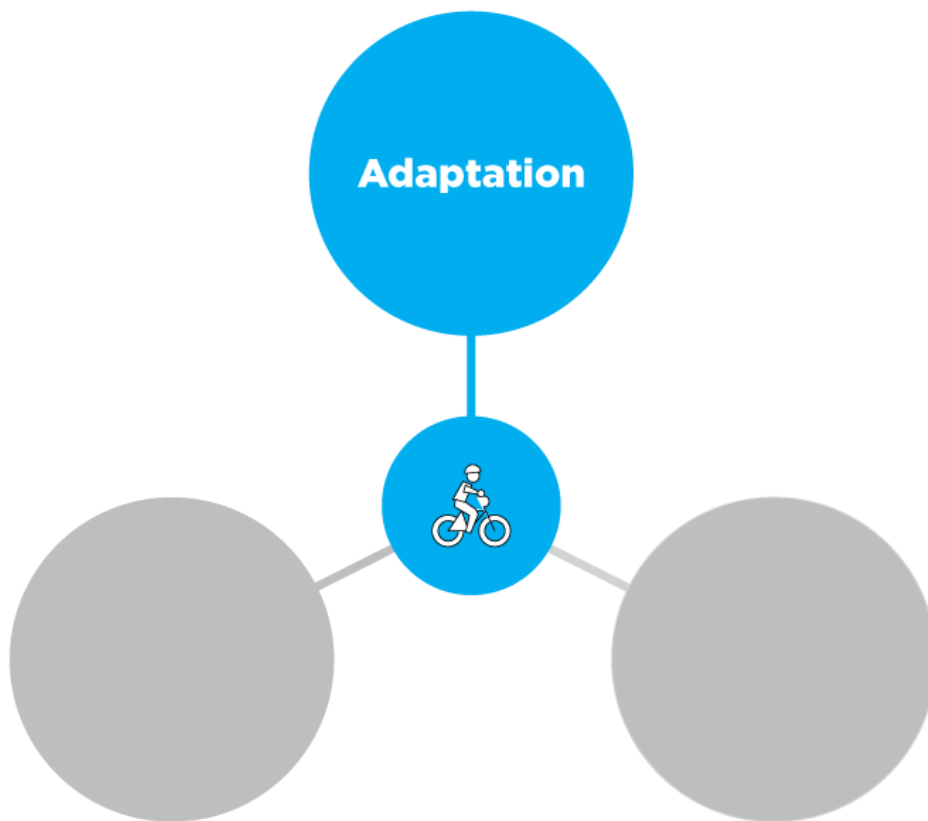
infrastructure, we can boost local trading and social cohesion whilst ensuring social distancing measures over the long term.

To build this active future for Australia, we recommend that the Morrison Government focus on three key domains: **adaptation**, **appeal** and **accessibility**. In this Federal Budget Submission, we provide key recommendations for each domain, and their associated budget impacts.

Bicycle Network's key federal budget asks



Adapting our urban spaces



As we adjust to accommodate the impacts of COVID-19, now is the time to explore how we can change our existing urban landscape to maximise health and wellbeing, restore our local economies, and invite Australians back into community spaces, whilst practicing appropriate social distancing measures.

Leisure and social cohesion are important life domains that contribute to increased health and well-being. The way we structure our urban space, including active travel facilities, will directly influence these domains^{13,14}, and it is therefore important to frame our infrastructure in this way.

In this section, we detail how Australia can **adapt** our urban space for post-COVID life. Our recommendations are exciting opportunities that will help boost physical and mental health outcomes, create jobs, safeguard businesses, and achieve a better normal.

Key recommendations

- 1.1** Establish urban placemaking and street-calming funds for urban space restoration
- 1.2** Commit to 250km of active travel infrastructure funding
- 1.3** Establish a 'local discoveries' fund to promote active tourism between local and regional communities

1.1 Establish urban placemaking and street-calming funds for urban space restoration

We need to address the significant social and mental health strains that COVID-19 has placed on communities¹⁵. We must also think of local businesses, which are not only recovering income lost during lockdown, but are adapting business models to fit safety guidelines and rebuilding trust with returning customers.

In May 2020, the Australian Government announced the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Program, which will deliver a total of \$1.5 billion to road and infrastructure projects across Australia¹⁶. Here, we outline additional measures the government can take to reshape our public space and put our communities on the road to restorative health and economic recovery.



1.1.1 Urban placemaking national fund

Parklets and placemaking initiatives allow councils to forgo large investments into urban transformation projects and, instead, repurpose sections of existing streetscape. The temporary nature of parklets means that ‘red tape’ is minimized and installation is fast. For businesses, it offers a way to beautify their block and attract more foot traffic. For governments, it is a minor investment to create innovative new public spaces that can change the shape of our cities. For communities, it adds new value to public spaces, allows for safe social interactions, and can lead to more long-term permanent ‘people-friendly’ streetscapes.

Many local councils across Australia are currently implementing successful parklet programs. For example, the NSW Government’s COVID-19 grants program *Streets as Shared Spaces* is demonstrating strong business and government support.

We recommend that the government continue to support opportunities for urban placemaking by introducing a funding package that specifically allows states and councils to fund key placemaking projects, and to subsidize the placemaking costs for small businesses. A one-off investment of **\$60 million** in the next fiscal year will fund 4,000 parklets nationally. This will provide a potential \$215 million to be injected back in our suffering hospitality economy, a 259 per cent return on investment.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$60.0 | \$- | \$- | \$- | \$60.0 |

1.1.2 'Safer streets' national street calming fund

Traffic calming primarily focuses on road speed limit reduction, through a combination of legislation and infrastructure. The International Transport Forum for the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), for example, recommends a 30km/h speed limit in built-up areas where people ride and walk¹⁷. Successful trials of reduced speed limits in Victoria's City of Yarra¹⁸ and City of Melbourne¹⁹ local government areas have both lead to permanent changes.

However, 'calming' should be viewed as more than just reducing speed limits. Research suggests that traffic calming measures can reduce road crashes, but street enhancements may also promote physical activity and enhance liveability^{13,20-22}. Streets that can be reshaped in this way are more inviting for people who are interested in riding a bike and walking, and can encourage them to spend more time in retail areas and contribute to local economies.

Bicycle Network is renewing its recommendation for the Australian Government to establish a \$40 million 'safer streets' national street calming fund, which will allow councils to enhance the liveability of major shopping streets, making them less car-focused and more pedestrian and bike friendly.

A notable example of street calming is the 'Little Streets' project recently implemented by the City of Melbourne. In this project, the council has targeted four one-way streets in the CBD and have implemented speed limit reductions (20km/h), and prioritised pedestrian space by installing bespoke stencil markings and street furniture.

A \$10 million per annum calming fund would allow other councils and municipalities across Australia to apply for up to \$250,000 each year to implement traffic calming measures in a local area.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$10.0 | \$10.0 | \$10.0 | \$10.0 | \$40.0 |



1.2 Commit to 250km of active travel infrastructure funding

Our current bike lanes and shared paths are full to the brim with active commuters and recreational users¹². Given this increased demand may exist well into the future, we have an exciting opportunity to make an investment in active travel infrastructure, and to promote bikes as a healthy, sustainable and economic option for Australians.

Public transport use, by contrast, has significantly declined and is likely to have a low transport mode share over the long term. If these patrons switch to private vehicles as their primary transport mode, there are likely to be negative impacts to roads and highways.

This impact, and the preventative role active transport can play, is extremely important to consider. An open 100m² space can fit just over 1,200 private vehicles, but over 9,350 bikes. That is **over six times** more bike riders than car drivers in the equivalent space.

Active transport, therefore, could play a critical role in easing the burden on our limited road space. But one of the common perceived barriers to bike riding and other active travel forms is lack of infrastructure²³.

The Australian Government have announced a \$7.5 billion boost in investment in major road infrastructure projects around the country as part of the Federal Government's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. Sadly, there has been no recognition of active travel projects.

Meanwhile in Victoria, the TAC Safer Cyclists and Pedestrian Fund is delivering \$100 million to walking and bike riding projects, in addition to more than 250 kilometres of active travel facilities, as part of the government's major transport infrastructure program²⁴.

We are recommending the Australian Government acknowledge the pivotal role of active travel in shaping our future populations by delivering an additional 250km of adaptable, separated bike lanes across Australia, as outlined in our *Pedalling to a Better Normal* health and stimulus plan²⁵. Separated bike lanes will not only keep our current bike riders safe²⁶, they have the potential to attract new riders²⁷. Laying down the path for people who ride will be a critical step as we repopulate the road space.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$100.0 | \$400.0 |

1.3 Establish a ‘local discoveries’ fund to promote active tourism between local and regional communities

We all want to get out. However, border restrictions, combined with the uncertainties around future international travel, has placed major impacts on tourist activities. The OECD estimates a minimum 60 per cent decline in the international tourism economy in 2020²⁸.

The impact on Australia’s tourism sector came quickly: a 40 per cent decrease in international visits and staffing reductions between 15-20 per cent at the end of June²⁹. As part of recovery planning, we will need to expand our options for domestic tourism to ensure our industry’s resilience.

However, we should also be cognizant of building back better. It is unsurprising that most tourist activities are made using private vehicles³⁰, and that tourism has a significant impact on traffic congestion³¹ and our carbon footprint^{32,33}. Mobility and accessibility are critical aspects that shape tourist activities³⁴, so how can we turn this around?

The expansion of nation-wide active tourism offers an exciting opportunity to bring Australians out of their homes and back into their communities and regional areas, whilst maintaining adequate social distancing. It offers a sustainable and economic option, whilst providing the social and leisure qualities that are important to travelers. It’s also an opportunity to promote long term healthy behaviours³⁴, and safeguard the income of our tourist businesses (bike hire, cafes, kiosks, accommodation).

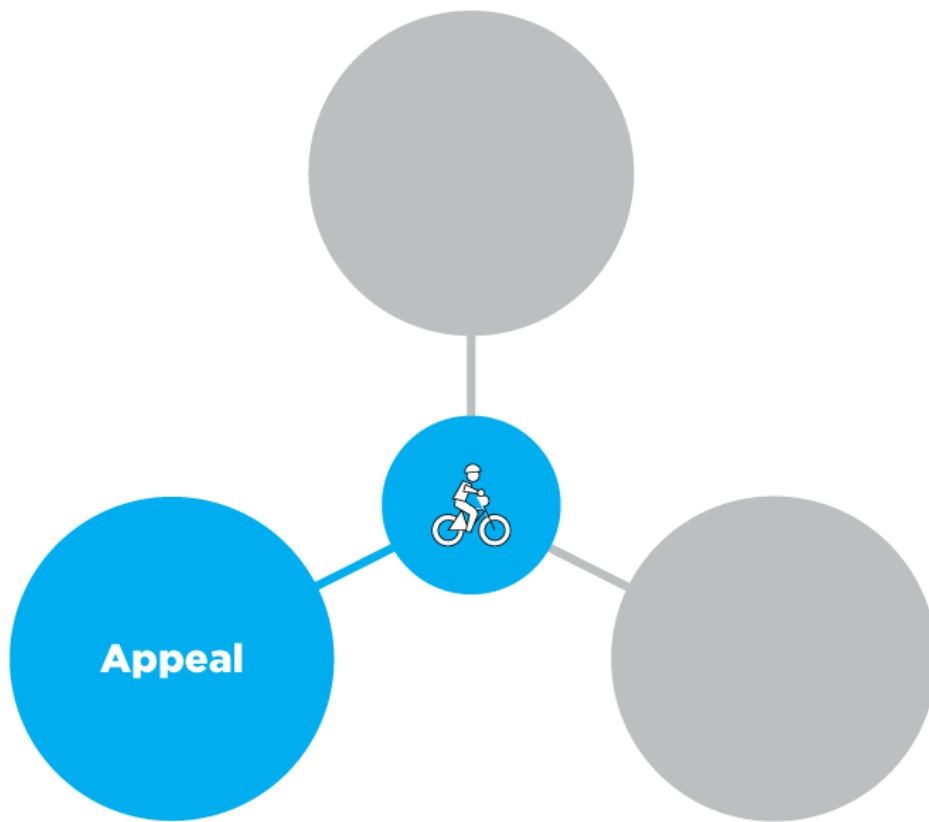
To do this, we will need to upgrade and extend our active travel infrastructure (shared paths and facilities), improve the carriage of bikes on various modes of public transport, and promote active travel tourist options³⁵.

A \$70 million per annum ‘local discoveries’ fund aims to connect Australians within the local and regional communities on our back doorstep. We recommend that funds be made available to state governments in the form of grant packages, to repurpose existing space with active travel facilities, or to develop and expand current facilities (e.g. rail trails), as a means of stimulating domestic tourism and regional jobs.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$70.0 | \$280.0 |



Increasing the appeal of active travel



Over nine million Australians have ridden a bike in the last year²⁹. Despite this, the bike-only share of work trips in our capital cities have experienced minimal growth (<1 per cent) since the 1970s³⁰. Riding a bike comprises less than 10 per cent of kids' school travel preference³¹.

Simply put, most Australians are familiar with bikes. Given that the majority of Australians already have the equipment, skills and motivation, we should leverage this target group for promoting an active bike riding lifestyle.

Cycling promotion campaigns have been shown to increase cycling activity on shared paths in Australia in the past²⁰. However, many promotional interventions have been unable to significantly increase population cycling due to poor funding and, as a result, limited community reach³².

Now is our chance to increase the **appeal** of active travel, to get more people out and earning the health rewards. To do that, we require interventions that influence long-term behaviour change.

Key recommendations

- 2.1** Funding for programs that increase cycling diversity
- 2.2** Funding for national Ride2School and Road Ready programs
- 2.3** Introduce national pay-to-ride-to-work and tax rebate schemes

2.1 Funding programs that increase bike rider diversity

While bike education programs have the power to do great things⁴⁰, unfortunately there isn't a 'one-size-fits-all' model. To get more people out on a bike, we need to first accept some hard truths about the people who currently ride them:

- Females comprise less than a quarter of our national bike riding population⁴¹.
- Older people (>50 years) comprise less than a fifth of our national bike riding population³⁶.

Geography is also an important factor. For example, car dependence has been linked to lower socioeconomic environments⁴². It is therefore no surprise that there are pockets of high and low cycling participation across different parts of our capital cities.

If we want to increase bike rider diversity, we must tailor behaviour changes programs for minority groups. Bicycle Network's 'Mind.Body.Pedal', a holistic program targeting secondary school female students, has impacted over 2,000 young females, increasing their physical confidence, social awareness, self-esteem, and desire to remain physically active throughout adulthood. The 'Seniors on Saddles' program, run by the Queensland Fitness, Sport and Recreation Skills Alliance (QFSRSA), is a five week bike training program that promotes active ageing.

Bicycle Network is recommending that the federal government establish a \$6 million per annum fund for the implementation of bike education program grants (up to \$200K) that specifically aim to increase the diversity of bike riders. This will allow for thirty metropolitan and rural programs to be implemented across Australia each year.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$8.0 | \$32.0 |



2.2 Ride2School and RoadReady programs: getting kids moving

2.2.1 The Ride2School program

Unfortunately, Australia is still far from reaching the physical activity guidelines set by the Australian Government (Fig. 3). In particular, one in four young Australians are classed as overweight or obese⁴³, a statistic that has increased significantly since the 1980s⁴⁴, and places a significant burden on health-related quality of life⁴⁵.

Over the same time period, the majority of Australian young people have been chauffeured to school^{46,47}. By comparison, the number of young people engaging in active travel has decreased to between 25–35 per cent³⁸. Not only are our young people losing an opportunity to get active, their lack of morning physical activity affects their ability to learn⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰.

In 2006, Bicycle Network piloted the Victorian Government-funded Ride2School program in 13 schools. We have now expanded the program nation-wide, with 3,531 schools across Australia registered with the program (Fig. 4).

Our Ride2School program succeeds because our behaviour change methodology is proven to increase active travel in school communities.

We are recommending the Australian Government invest in a national Ride2School program, which can lead the way in promoting active school travel. Not only will young Australians lead happier and healthy lives, their active travel behaviours will also allow them to fully engage during school time and make the most of their education experience.

Australians at risk of adverse health effects due to insufficient physical behaviour

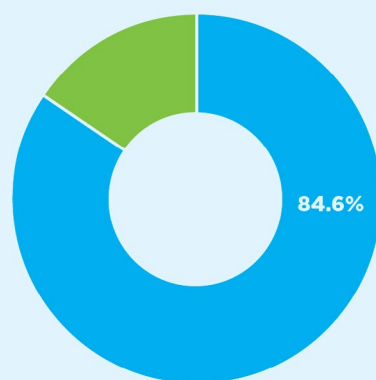


Figure 3 - Physical activity in Australia at a glance. Blue section represents the proportion of Australians showing insufficient physical activity per week (84.6 per cent). Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics⁴³.

Increase in school participation

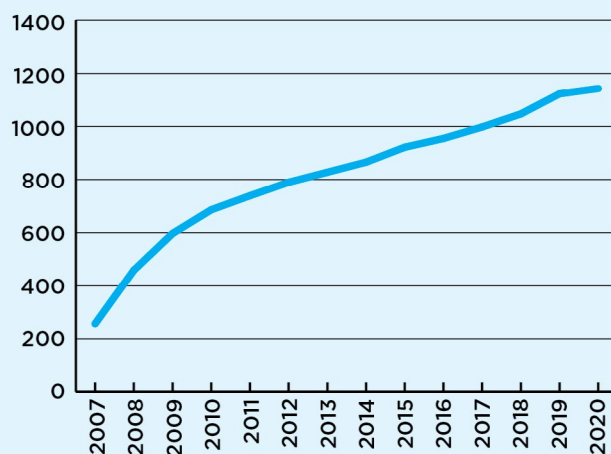


Figure 4 - Increase in Victorian Ride2School participation since 2007, based on Handsup! counts. Data source: Bicycle Network.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$4.0 | \$4.0 | \$4.0 | \$4.0 | \$16.0 |

2.2.2 The RoadReady program

Too many Australians die on our roads each year. After the flashpoint of the early 1970s, our road toll was steadily driven down through ground-breaking initiatives like seat belts, random breath testing, speed enforcement, and improved road and vehicle standards.

However, in the last seven years the progress has stalled. Around 117 young drivers have died on our roads each year since 2013, despite the current preventative measures and awareness campaigns (Fig. 5). The yearly change equates to a mere drop of 1 per cent. This means that, under our current preventative measures and awareness campaigns it will take **135 years** to reach zero road crashes.

It's time to give something else a try. Teaching young people road safety from behind the handlebars, before they get behind the wheel, will make a significant difference.

RoadReady is Bicycle Network's new initiative for increasing road safety in young people. Focusing on theory and practical sessions both inside and outside the classroom, the program will ensure all students are equipped to deal with the challenges of active travel. By completing a range of diverse education and skills modules (e.g. ABC checks, supported

Young driver (17-25) fatalities between the years 2013-2019

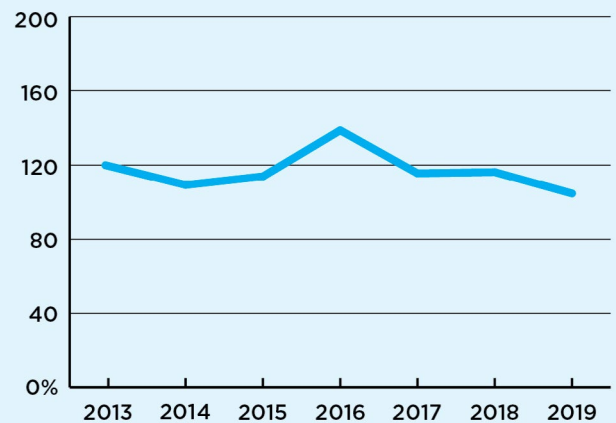


Figure 5 - Longitudinal variation in the number of young driver fatalities in Australia between the years 2013-2019. Data source: Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE)⁵¹.

group rides, 'how-to' traffic behaviours), students will build the skills and confidence to navigate all kinds of traffic environments.

In order to implement a new state-wide road safety education campaign with bike riding at its core, we followed a similar costing method to our national Ride2School program that takes into consideration expenses of setting up a new program.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$5.5 | \$5.5 | \$5.5 | \$5.5 | \$22.0 |



2.3 Introduce national pay-to-ride-to-work and tax rebate schemes

2.3.1 Pay-to-ride-to-work scheme

Despite its health benefits, riding a bike to work continues to be staggeringly low, comprising less than 1 per cent of work commutes in some of our capital cities^{37,52}. Driving remains the dominant method of travel, with over 79 per cent of Australians commuting in a private vehicle⁵³.

To encourage a healthy commute, Bicycle Network is renewing previous calls for the Australian Government to incentivise active travel by introducing a scheme where commuters can receive a government benefit of \$2.50 for every trip to work made by bicycle.

Research has shown that people can be effectively motivated to engage in more bike riding when financial incentives are offered⁵⁴. Rewarding people who ride to work with a \$2.50 bonus (up to \$655 per annum) will encourage even more people to reach for a bike rather than their car keys.

If we shift as little as four per cent of car trips to active transport, we can remove **260,000 private vehicles** from our roads during the work commute periods, which is equivalent to **2246km² of road space**. In addition, we can push the Australian commuters towards achieving the active health outcomes set out in the government's *Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines*.

Assuming a target of 4 per cent uptake in commuters, a national incentivisation scheme is estimated at \$170 million per annum.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$170.0 | \$170.0 | \$170.0 | \$170.0 | \$680.0 |

1.6.2 Tax rebates for commuter bicycles

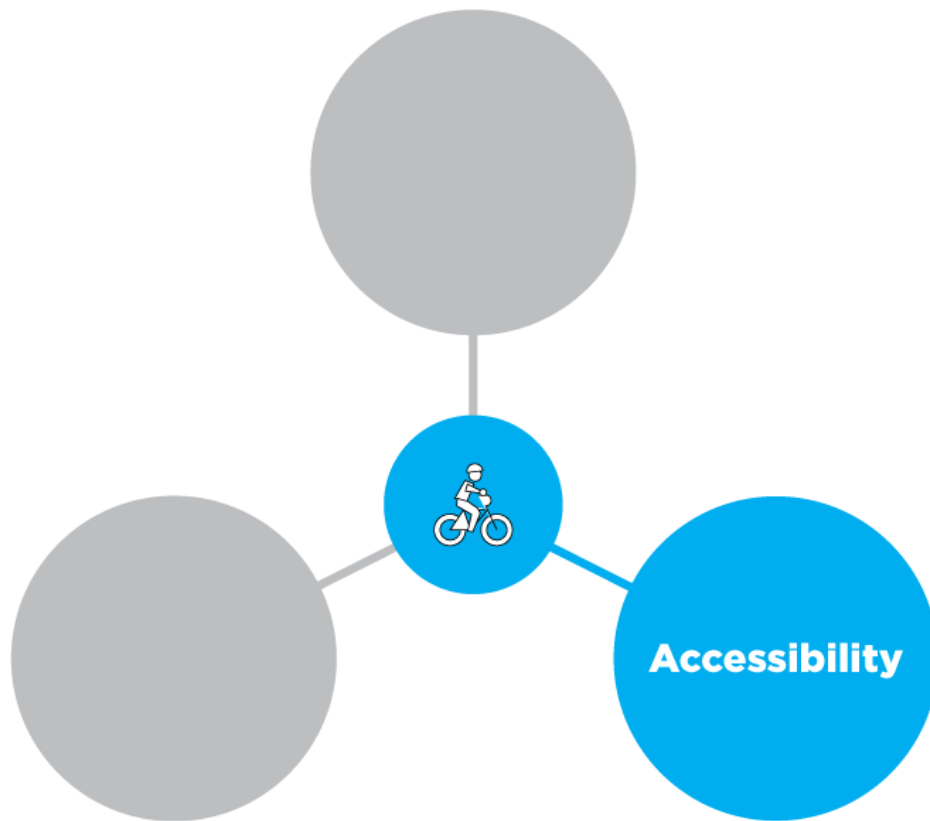
In addition to an incentivisation scheme, Bicycle Network recommends that Australia adopts a tax rebate scheme for all bicycles used for riding to work by offering a 25 per cent rebate (up to \$500).

A tax rebate scheme will encourage Australians to purchase sustainable modes of transport that reduce the burden on our roads while also providing better health outcomes and reducing pollution.

An upper limit cost of \$130 million per annum means that we can potentially turn 4 per cent (260 thousand) of our Australian commuters into bike riders.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$130.0 | \$130.0 | \$130.0 | \$130.0 | \$520.0 |

Increasing the accessibility of bike riding



For the benefits of cycling to reach the highest number of individuals, we need to rethink the road space. We need to identify and remove existing barriers for bike riders. This will require policy changes and interventions that minimize risks and create a safe road space for all.

The Australian Government has announced that \$2 billion will be provided over 18 months for road safety initiatives. As active travel continues to grow across Australia, we recommend that the government allocates part of this funding towards initiatives that ensure the safety of our current and future bike riders.

In this section, we have provided three key recommendations that are critical for increasing the **accessibility** of bike riding.

Key recommendations

- 3.1** Establish a national strategy to target distracted driving
- 3.2** Establish national prevention measures and awareness programs to eliminate 'dooring'
- 3.3** Establish national safety standards and fund awareness programs for heavy vehicles

3.1 Establish a national strategy to target distracted drivers

Our national road toll continues to decrease each year, but we are yet to achieve the same goal with people who ride bikes (Fig. 6). Unfortunately, around 85 per cent of the serious bike crashes in Australia involve another vehicle⁵¹. If we are to build Australia’s active future, we need to take action on road behaviours that place vulnerable road users at risk of serious injury.

One of the most prevalent behaviours affecting our roads is distracted driving. Each time a driver eats, drinks, or checks their phone, their driving abilities are compromised. When drivers are distracted they are effectively ‘travelling blind’, which causes significantly large areas of the road space to become hazardous for other road users (Fig. 7).



Distracted driving is driver-less travel

- Drivers distracted for 2 seconds on a 90km/h road are traveling blindly for **50 metres**, the length of an Olympic swimming pool.
- Drivers distracted for 5 seconds on a 60km/h road are traveling blindly for **83 metres**, the length of 18 cars.
- Drivers distracted for 10 seconds on a 100km/h road are traveling blindly for **278 metres**, the length of a staggering 62 cars.

In this budget period, we are pushing for the Australian Government to introduce a national strategy to tackle distracted driving, one that combines technology-neutral road legislation with stronger culpable driving laws that will deter distracted drivers.

Bike rider and car driver fatalities between 2000-2019

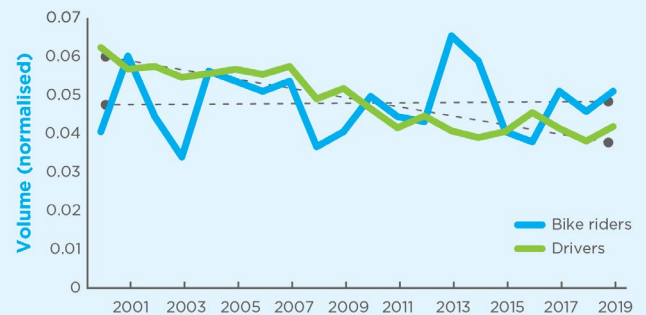


Figure 6 – Differences between bike rider and car driver fatalities over the last ten years. Data normalized for comparison. Source: Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE).

The relationship between distracted driving and vehicle speeds

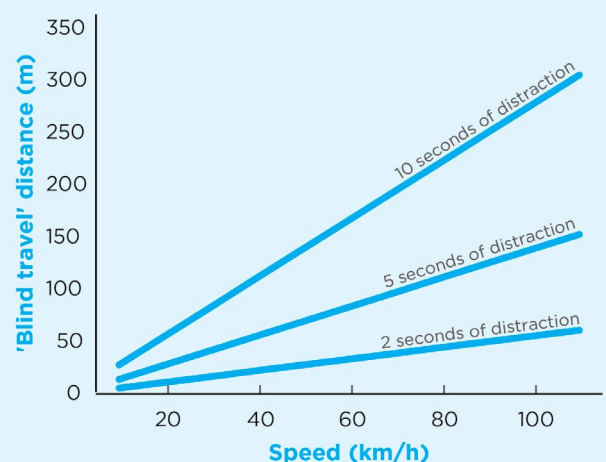


Figure 7 – Relationship between the total distance over which a driver is distracted (‘blind travel’), and the vehicle speed.

In a 2019 submission to the National Transport Commission⁵⁵, Bicycle Network outlined eight recommendations for developing technology-neutral road rules to prevent distracted driving.

1. Rapid roll out of hi-tech traffic camera technologies and legal reforms that make it easier for police to enforce distracted driving laws.
2. National advertising campaigns to highlight different kinds of distracted driving and their consequences.
3. Higher penalties for distracted driving with consistency across states and territories.
4. Fast-track in-vehicle mobile phone blocking technologies with mandated implementation across all new vehicles sold in Australia.
5. In-built opt-out 'Do not disturb while driving' apps automatically activated in all smartphones sold in Australia.
6. Autonomous vehicle technology in all new cars sold in Australia.
7. A national crash database to track the causes of crashes and the impact of distracted driving.
8. Research into the motivations of distracted driving with a focus on smartphone use.

We are calling on the government to acknowledge these recommendations alongside stricter culpable driving laws as part of a national approach to minimize distracted driving. We are asking our leaders to say enough is enough.

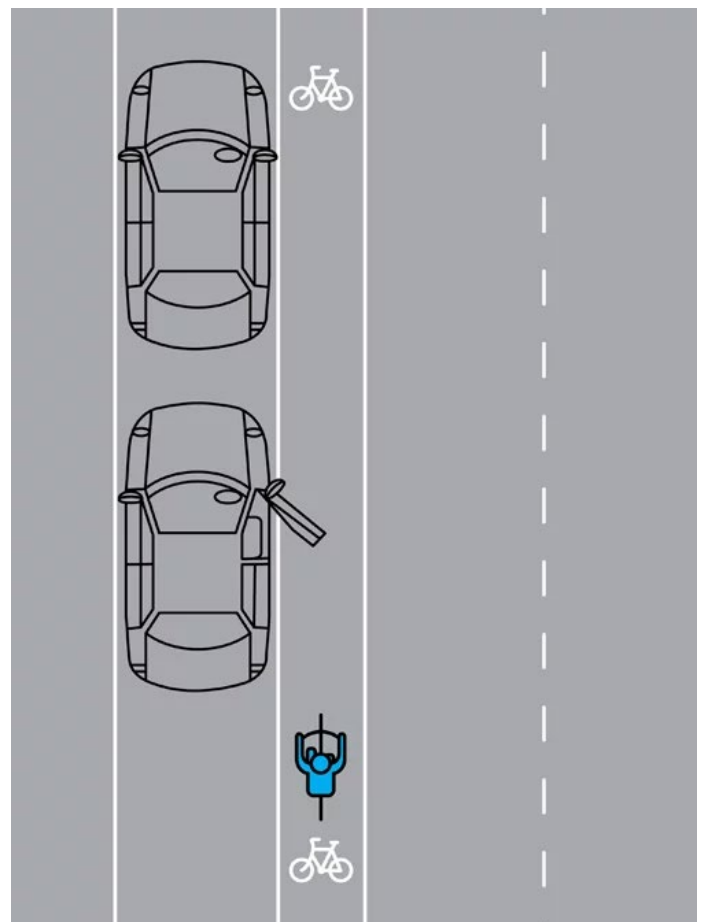
3.2 Establish national prevention measures and awareness programs to eliminate ‘dooring’

Bicycle accidents involving collision with the opened door of a parked car, or ‘dooring’, should be viewed as a high-risk crash type where bike lanes run parallel with on-street parking.

While Bicycle Network’s 2019 crash report suggests that one in ten bike crashes are related to dooring incidents, previous reports suggest the injuries sustained in dooring crashes are typically more severe than other vehicle collision crashes⁵⁶. Other studies have found that between 3-8 per cent of serious bike accidents (those involving authorities or hospitalization) are related to dooring⁵⁷. The high severity of dooring collisions should be taken very seriously.

The primary solution to mitigate risk is modifying the built environment. There is overwhelming evidence that bike riders perceive bike lanes parallel to on-street parking as unsafe and less appealing for cycling⁵⁸. However, given the significant increase in bike riding uptake, we are pushing for more urgent measures to protect riders, especially those with less on-road experience.

Bicycle Network recommends that the Morrison Government introduces stricter measures for deterring drivers from opening car doors adjacent to bike lanes. We would like to see stricter legislation and harsher penalties for offending drivers. In addition, education for both riders and drivers will help out to convey the serious nature of these collision types.



3.3 Establish national safety standards and fund awareness programs for heavy vehicles

3.3.1 Establish national safety standards for heavy vehicles

Bicycle Network is calling on the federal government to require that all heavy vehicles be fitted with the following:

1. Class V mirrors and reversing and blind spot cameras, giving the driver a better view of road users around their vehicles;
2. Side underrun protection to protect bike riders from being dragged under the wheels in the event of a collision;
3. Audible left turn warning and reverse squawker alert systems to communicate heavy vehicle movements to all road users; and
4. Hydraulic payload monitoring system to determine and notify drivers of real-time truck weight.

The total expenditure to fully satisfy these upgrade requirements is approximately \$10,000 per vehicle. As such, we recommend that the federal government introduce a subsidy scheme to help accelerate these upgrades and to assist small business owners meet the requirements, with an immediate tax write off for new heavy vehicles that meet the revised standards.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$37.5 | \$37.5 | \$37.5 | \$37.5 | \$150.0 |

3.3.2 Fund a national heavy vehicle training and road user awareness program

Improving the safety of our vulnerable road users around heavy vehicles is not solved entirely by mandating equipment changes. We must also build a shared understanding of the limitations each group faces when it comes to visibility, behaviours, perspective and vulnerability.

Educational interventions, such as Bicycle Network’s ‘Swapping Seats’ program, raise awareness about where and how people who walk and ride should position themselves around trucks and heavy vehicles.

Providing a \$1.4 million per annum funding for a national awareness program like Swapping Seats will help to not only raise awareness. It will build consistent and clear communication about the expected behaviours of drivers and bike riders. Vulnerable road user training should also be introduced and mandated across all truck driver licensing curriculums.

| Financial year | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | TOTAL \$m |
|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Budget impact | \$1.4 | \$1.4 | \$1.4 | \$1.4 | \$5.6 |

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